



COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION & EDUCATION
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To prevent and treat disease and disability; to promote healthy lifestyles; and to protect and promote the health and quality of our environment.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Seal 2002 - Treasure Valley Promotes National Children's Dental Health Month

February is National Children's Dental Health Month and Seal 2002 campaign will offer dental sealants to children free of charge. Dental sealants are a simple and effective way to prevent the most common type of tooth decay in molar teeth. In an effort to improve the oral health of school aged children, Central District Health Department, Terry Reilly Health Services (TRHS) Boise Dental program, and American Institute Of Health Technology have chosen 8 Elementary Schools to implement this project in February 2002.

During the month of February, second-grade students with parental permission will be transported to TRHS Boise Dental and the American Institute of Health Technology, to receive the dental sealants. Dentists, Registered Dental Hygienists, dental hygiene and dental assisting students, will volunteer their time to provide the services and education. The transportation cost and the sealant material is provided by the Central District Health Department, made possible through a grant from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Bureau of Health Promotion.

Second-grade students who participate in SEAL 2002 will benefit in several ways. As part of this year's campaign, students will participate in the SEAL 2002 Health and Safety Fair held in the Anderson Center at St. Luke's Regional Medical Center and at American Institute of Health dental clinic. Representatives from St. Luke's Regional Medical Center, students from the Boise State University dental assisting program, YMCA, Idaho Power, Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center and the Boise Police Department will be on hand to educate students about nutrition, oral health, fitness and safety. Idaho Dairy Council is providing tooth friendly nutritious snacks for the students.

Dr. Erin Ostteen, TRHS Dental Director explains the importance of sealants in a recent statement, "Protecting the deep grooves on the chewing surfaces of permanent teeth can significantly decrease the incidence of decay. The average sealant can provide up to 8 years of protection with the correct oral hygiene and diet."

Central District Health Department's Oral Health Coordinator, Lalani Ratnayake has seen the effects on children who suffer from severe tooth decay, "If we can somehow educate kids early on the importance of keeping healthy teeth, and place sealants on their newly erupted molars, we are helping to prevent and reduce the most common chronic childhood disease... tooth decay".

TRHS Dental Volunteer Coordinator, Blossom Johnston said, "Without the public-private partnerships, which are at the heart of SEAL 2002, we would not be able to provide this service. Our partners are committed to this community and overall well being of our people.

Michelle Schipper, Registered Dietitian for St. Luke's commented, "nutrition and oral health are so closely linked and SEAL 2002 is a great opportunity for us to educate students about health issues that affect them now and their whole life".

Oral health is the gateway to overall health. With campaigns like SEAL 2002, we have the opportunity to impact the health of our community in a positive way.

For more information about Central District Health Department, visit our web site at www.cdhd.org.

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